







THE TORRENT
and
OTHER POEMS



"Now, on the coasts of sky,
The silent doors of Heaven gape with joy."

The Torrent and Other Poems

by

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*THE EARTH AND
THE WATERS*

The Torrent

(Niagara in Winter)

OTHOU great priest of all the nations, thou
Whose immemorial chanting shakes the sky!
The suns of ages on thy reverend brow
Linger, in glorious life, immortally.

I come again to hear the eternal tone
Of immolated waters, where the leap
Of thy vast brightness makes perpetual moan,
And lifts unwearied litanies from the deep.
And lo!

I find thy priestly waters clad in snow;
And where the choral rapids used to sweep,
Surpliced in frost, like weary worshippers they sleep!

All mystical in white,
Cliffs, waves and trees are vested deep with light,
As for high pageant of some solemn feast!

 The mighty altar of thy steeps, aglow
 With ceremonial show,
Twinkles with mimic suns; thy tapers bright
Astound the bashful sight;

 And wistful, hovering clouds of swirling mist
Have never ceased

 To hang the shivering trees, by cold winds kissed,
With marvelous, clear robes, in lacy silver fleeced.

Oh the vast arc of that white altar, glowing
With crystal columns of thy frozen streams!
Gigantic pillars, halted in their flowing,
Lucent with lightnings of marmoreal gleams;
Their flutings vaster than old Egypt's glory,
Chiselled to fretted arabesques of frost,
In the white windings of those vistas hoary
Bewildered sunbeams wander, and are lost.

Ah, bleak and beautiful! and clear
With more than earthly glitterings of delight,
Thine ice-built altar here
Quivers with flowers of celestial light,
Keen
With swift and tremulous sheen,
And streaming clouds of beauty from its height!

Around, in robes of state,
The patriarchal forests stand,
With their deep, paradisal fruitings hoar.
Obsequious they wait
While, chanting low, the waters deck them more;
Strewing their crystal fancies on the land,
Weaving the woods with many a strange device,
With snowy bands and crackling stays of ice,
Until amazing glories flash and flow
Where the white forests glow,
And all the common world is covered under,
With hills of splendour and with vales of wonder!

The vaporous incense of thy restless wave
Is whirled in clouds of glory, freezing far!
On every jutting crag the restless play
Of thy swift, eager water piles away
A heap of icy foam. The raging war
Of freezing torrents, teased to flinging spray,
Has left thy stones as lovely as a star!
Where the pale stretches of thine ice fields are,
Hark, the trapped surges impotently rave,—
Roar furious, prisoned in their shining cave.

And still,
The steadfast waters keep their earnest will,
On pouring towards the brink of their desire.
The sacrificial torrent, whelmed and lost
In passionless, deep frost,
Leaps onward with its immemorial fire.
Still, with its ancient joy, its olden fear,
The liquid litany of the waves I hear;
And echo, through the white, impassive walls,
The deep reverberations of the falls.

No fetters of imperious cold
This brave, impetuous surge can stay;
From the wild winter's freezing hold
The eager current leaps away;
And, through the far-flung ice, resistless poured,
The ever valiant wave, to win its way,
Shakes the white lightnings of its silver sword!

Kept Beauty

NO loveliness is ever lost.
The unseen glories of the dawn,
The light on lonely breakers tossed,
Where the white oceans thunder on;
Sunsets, on hidden alps afire;
Lilies, in untrod fields that blow;
Yea, each remote and starry spire
That lost and distant heavens know,—
Have One their splendours to admire.

For God, that Beauty past delight,
Hath every fairness in His sight,
Earth's hidden beauties but express
His own immortal loveliness,
And, in the lowliest, He sees,
Mirrored, celestial sanctities!

Starlight

THE sky
Is very rich with stars this summer night,
Like pearls on velvet cast they glow, so bright,
The questing eye,
Is dazzled with their sparklings of delight.
From their deep dome of air,
They blaze in golden flame, bewilderingly fair.

The milky way is like a cloth of gold,
In spendthrift glory carpeting the deep:
Sheer on the blue its splendid woof unrolled
Shines in soft radiance on the zenith steep,
In whose warm creases, rippling fold on fold,
The dreaming stars, like rosy cherubs, sleep.

Far, on the quivering border of the plain,
Orion blazes with barbaric glee;
His glistering sword
Marshalls the thronging stars with majesty.
On heaven's wide road ascends the lumbering Wain,
The huddling hosts of lesser stars are poured
In such bright streams the glorious sight is pain.

Oh gaze! and see.

God's splendour limned in suns upon the height!
Eternally,
The holy heavens spill their urns of light:
With bright insistency,
His orbèd lauds across the void they write.

Who can behold

Those shining choirs, vigilant in praise,
Their flaming hymnal scrolled

Across the boundless heaven's unending ways,
Nor feel his heart in rapturous song upraise,
Reading God's glories from this page of gold!

Summer and Winter

SUMMER is sweet, but winter is austere;

Summer is full of songs, but winter, still.

Summer's morns the deep-cupped vales with gladness fill;
But even winter's noons are bleak and sere.

The ruddy summer wreathes the woods with cheer,
And sets her flowery seal on every hill:

But the wan winter, with a pensive will,
Haunts empty fields and naked glades severe.

Yet winter hath her loveliness, no less:

A pale and silent princess, oft asleep,

Resigned and still expectant, waiting long,—

While pallid flowers of snow her cheeks caress,—

For the young Spring. That tryst is joy more deep

Than the gay summer's suns, and woods ashake with song!

By the Sea

FOREVER and forever and forever
The lovely breakers blossom to the shore.
The seas are budding with white joy, and never
Fails their fresh foam, the music of their roar.
Now, as of old, I stand in trancéd glee,
And watch the ancient beauty rise and pour,
And taste the exultation of the sea!

I feel the mystery of the troubled surges,
Out on the deep, and how they run and rise,
Where some divine and secular disquiet urges
The lowly waters upward, toward the skies.
Now, as of old, and for all days of days,
The liquid breast of ocean heaves and sighs,
With olden sobbing, and the olden praise.

The savour of the salty spray is blowing,
Sweet as a meadow when the grass is mown;
With a strange youth the hoary sea is glowing,
Its leaping strength no weariness hath known.
It will endure, and wear this sunny smile,
When the soft summer o'er our tombs is grown,
And we are far, who stand and gaze this while.

The glory of the golden sun is blazing
On the smooth welter of the rising wave;
The silver crests, their dazzling splendour raising,
Fling back unto the sun the gleams he gave.
Thus did they ere my feeble life was born;
Thus will they when I long am in the grave,
Through endless evens till the Judgment morn.

Our Land

I LOVE

The land we live in, love its lordly shore,
And inland beauty. Wide, and vast, and sweet,
The reach of western prairies to my feet;
And all the sweep of eastern tides is dear.
Ah, the great glory of our wildernesses,
Where deeps of meadow with thick bloom are hoary!
And the abounding grandeur of the hills,
Clad in high trees, whose summits wink with glory!
Abysmal forests where calm summer sleeps!

I love the rivers, where the swelling tide
Laughs, in the light of morning, like a sea.
Their calm and ample bosoms, brimming wide,
Water the winsome shores to bloomy glee;
Their smile unto my soul makes holiday for me.

I love their tides, that with a wistful motion,
Forever seeking, nevermore at rest,
Are thronging towards the dim, desired ocean,
To melt into its caves and be at rest.
I love the rich and generous fields,—their sod
Speaks of the bounteous care of gracious God!

This is a temple, this good land we live in.
It hath its rich and tessellated floor,
Like some Venetian shrine, all wave-surrounded,
With ocean at its back and at its door.
Its walls are builded of the wastes of ocean,
Roofed with the splendours of the starry sky,—
Great guardians of this land, the well-defended,
Ye let no spoiling foe, nor treacherous, by!

Weaving Willows

WHEN that most bright and sudden start of Spring
Hath, in the North, the slumbering woodlands stirred;
When Judas-trees a vivid crimson fling,
And the wild hedges harbour many a bird.

When mists, that linger on the long hill's crest,
Wed the faint heights in dimness to the sky,
And rushes, dreaming on the water's breast,
Waken, with trembling fingers, reaching high.

Then the slim willows on the shores are seen,
Weaving bright beds, whereon the Spring may sleep;—
A soft and sunny tapestry of green,
Which the pale waters love, and mirror deep!

On the Mountains

*T*OSSED and billowed like the sea,
The mountains rise in majesty.
'Tis Autumn, and their coasts of gold
Are fringed with glories manifold.

High on the altar of the hills
Proceeds their ancient sacrifice.
In vestments of a thousand dyes
The sacerdotal summits rise,
And incense all the valleys fills.

The torches of the oaks are bright
In lambent flame upon the steep;
And, garlanding the sacred height,
The crimson creepers flaming leap.
The maples wave their cloths of light.
No glorious color is away
From this tremendous holiday!

Upon the cliffs, in scarlet flood,
Pours rich the sacrificial blood.
The fervent headlands sacred glow,
The gales, like festive trumpets, blow.
Thus the great hills, that priestly rise,—
Fulfil their mystic Sacrifice!

Unexpressed

WHEN I behold the loveliness of earth,
The beauty of the skies and of the sea,
The moving, tender pageant giveth birth
To overwhelming gratefulness in me;
A thankfulness to God which is a woe,
For how to say my thanks I do not know.

Yet it is bliss to have so sweet a pain,
Joy thus to grieve, and pleasure to complain!

Nightfall

MARIA! When the shadows fall,
At twilight, when the winds are still,
When, from the wood, the night-birds call,
And dusk is heavy on the hill,
When stars their trembling tapers light,
The white moon floats in heaven free,
The whole world glimmers on the sight,——
Maria! then I call to thee!

Life hath its evening, as the day,
Slowly the quiet shadows creep,
Familiar outlines faint away,
The weary heart is lulled to sleep,
O dearest guide, through all the dark,
Be with me 'till the shadows flee,
Unto my passing prayer Oh hark!
Maria! When I call to thee!

A Poet

A ROBIN, early on the wing,
Pipes loud, and fancies it is spring!
The happy bird, serenely wrong,
Evokes all springtide with a song!

Sicilian Prayer

HERE the mild ocean laps with blue
The green and soft Sicilian shore,
And the clear heaven's tender hue
Tints the deep waves that rise and pour.

The fishers' sails, like gulls, are bright
Along the bosom of the bay;
From watchful morn to drowsy night,
Madonna, all to thee they pray!

The fickle harvests of the sea
Must feed their wailing babes,—they keep
Their weary vigils on the deep,
And lift their trustful cry to thee!

The Dawning

NOW the chaste dawn in heaven is fair,
And startled peaks in glory glow.
Now sudden splendour streaks the air,
And dewy meadows wake below.

Now night, his inky garments torn,
Flees to dank caverns of the West
And, singing, all the winds of morn
Walk on the waters' rippling breast.

Now the great sky, a budded rose,
Reddens with promise of the day.
And earth's wide circle answering glows
Thrusting its veiling mists away.

O thou sweet Maid, whose birth foretold
The coming of the Holy One,
Thou art this Morn, whose timid gold
Foretells, in yon far sky, the sun.

In Excelsis

HOW the wild mountains cry to God!
 Their deep and shaggy bosom calls,
 With boom of thunderous waterfalls,
And winds that roar on peaks untrod!

What great and solemn rapture fills
The heart of the eternal hills;
Robed in an everlasting peace;—
Their psalms arise nor ever cease!

Their scarred and seamy fronts are bright
 With dawns unseen. The gales around
 Loud on that solemn organ sound,
And hymn the Lord to depth and height.

Botany

ONCE, in an idle time, I made
Sweet pastime, in the sun and shade,
To call the flowers of the wood
Each by her name, antique and good.

And now, in any flowering time,
Neath any sky, in any clime,
Where lissom flowers sway and bend,
They nod, I answer, friend to friend.

CITIES OF MEN

The Street

THE moving thousands change and flow
 Upon the street; their voices rise,
As murmurous as cataracts go,
 That leap and clamor to the skies.
 Here maidens walk in dreamy peace;
And aged men pass creeping slow;
 And children run with starry eyes.

The stir and laughter never cease,
 Nor gusty oaths nor plaintive sighs.
This is the wide and populous street,
 Whereon the best and worst of men
 Forever meet,
And part, and seek their various ways again,
 The wearied street, the memory-haunted plain.

Here, in the space
Where undesisting millions move and pass,
Our strange, bewildering race
Is mirrored, in a magical, bright glass,
All its deep passion and uncured distress,
Its pain and love, its mirth and nobleness!

There are fair children in this motley crowd,
Their souls as pure
As snowflakes in the bosom of a cloud,
Ah! list, their silvery glee,
Breaks into laughter sweet as minstrelsy.

There are mild maids, demure

In conscious beauty, fresher than new day,

With what a youthful grace they wend their way,

Intent,

On some light, girlish quest, on some gay errand bent.

And there are mothers, wrinkled sore with care,

In whose kind eyes a weary gladness glows.

Life, with its joy and pain, is mirrored there.

Its ecstasies and woes—

For there are deeps of life which but a mother knows!

And men press on, unseeing, through the throng,
Parting its tides with an insistent might;
And playful boys run merrily along,
Spending their golden hours with free delight.

This is the wide and populous street
Whereon the best and worst of men
Forever meet,
And part, and seek their various ways again,
The wearied street, the memory-haunted plain.

The Airmen

WE dare
Achieve the swift and perilous roads of air:
The dawn
Is sprinkled with our rosy coming on;
Our wings are bright
Upon the flaming edges of the night.

The rude, unmastered gale
Shrieks with derision round our pinions frail.
He would prevail,
Scorning our rule, and dash us from his height!—
We soar above the cloud; his envious wail
Faints in our ear, outspeeded by our flight.

Yonder, upon his misty peak, alone
Sits the old eagle. For a hundred years
He ruled these barren heavens. Now, more high,
Our soaring squadrons roam the wondering sky.
The fateful thunder of our wings, he hears!
Like an old monarch, rivalled on his throne,
His eyes are dim and he desires to die.

Howls in our ears the unsubstantial air,
And the wild deeps unto the deeps complain,
That their free fastness hath been forced to bear
Imperious rovers in their pure domain,
Unscared, with even keel, we follow free
All the bright currents of this crystal sea.

What mariners of old,
Daring the tides and perils of the deep,
For precious wines or gold,
Such joy of watery dangers still could reap?
We sail through breathless days, on slender spars,
And glean the golden plunder of the stars!

In fleets, or flying lone
Across the gleaming meadows of the sky,
Kings of a new dominion, all our own,
Aloof from earth and unto heaven more nigh,
What heart
But envies us our pure, aerial part,
In peace and war, above men's passions high?—

Yea, will not you
Seeing our calm and glorious flocks amid the blue,
Join our bright brotherhood, and dare to fly?

This City

WHO will uncover the hidden glory
That shines at the heart of modern things?—
Of the engine, plumed with breathings hoary,
As forth on his glittering ways he springs;
Of the laboring furnaces' glamorous might,
As their red lips roar to the startled night,
And the valorous cranes, that heave and sigh,
Lifting their terrible loads towards the sky?

Who will discover the hid romance
That sings and glows 'twixt the smoke and the din,—
Of the fires of wonder that glimmer and dance
When the Mills of Magic their spells begin,
When, from the fiery heart of the steel,
Sparks and showers of radiance reel,
When, hissing and glowing, the long bars flare,
And the dark is dazed with the roaring glare?

Not all of the splendour is vanished and fled,
Where the soft morn smiles on the hilltops fair,
For true men toil where the mills breathe red,
And strength and beauty and love are there.
God and His angels—and poets—can find
Through the veil of darkness, the light behind,
For the City of Earth is a wondrous whole,—
Man sees its body, but God its soul!

The Crossing

*(Lines written during the first crossing of the ocean
by airplanes)*

OUT of the West,
I see them flying, flying.
Their wings are weary on the ocean's breast,
Their mighty wings are weary and would rest,
I hear the sobbing of their motors, crying
Out of the West.

The great winds whisper as they eddy round them,
Moaning with wonder as they linger nigh;
On night's dim edge the startled dawn hath found them,
Droning, on restless wings, across the sky.
The drowsy sunset burns with sombre light,
Where the far fleckings of their forms are tossed,
And the last lingering of their way is lost,
In the astonished, starry maze of night.

Over tumultuous currents of mid ocean,
 High on the salty breathings of the deep,
Sail the strange ships. With fierce, perpetual motion
 Their dipping way above the clouds they keep.
Fated to danger, with a grim devotion,
 Their weary pinions winnow on the steep!

I hear the white gulls shrieking,
 The lapping waves complain,
Their wrath in clamor wreaking—
 Their peevish fury vain,
Above, on airy ways, ye follow free
The changing currents of a brighter sea.

Oh fare ye well! Humanity is daring
On your thin planes to cross the raging deep,
The hopes of nations on your wings upbearing,
Heralds of closer love the skies ye sweep,—
For, after you,
What friendly fleets come flying through the blue?

The New Year

WITH the new year,
 Skies, be clear,
Old woes forgot!
 With the year's morn,
 New hopes are born,
Griefs hurt us not!

Put off the old!
Hot wraths, be cold!
Mean envies flee!
 Old friendships keep,
 Let old ires sleep,
The year is new for thee!

Inspiration

DRIFTING, with delight,
From those mysterious and pleasant places
Of the uncharted mind, where dwell the graces,
What thoughts, serene and bright,
Please the poor poet; who hath labored long,
And taken never a song,
Though he hath watched his nets the livelong night!

Of all men, the poets know
They have no warrant proud to be!
For who can tell,
When he hath sung one lay, right clear and well,
If evermore his heart will rise with minstrelsy,
And feel the furthering gusts of inspiration blow?

For poets are like little ships, that sail,
Borne by great winds, upon a perilous sea,
They woo, with timid wings, the mastering gale,
Death on their port, and danger on the lee.
While the wind pleases, on they go with glee!
But when it dies,
With flapping cloth their helpless vessel lies,
Looking to God, and waiting, wan with trust.
For the dear favor of a lifting gust!

CHILDREN

The Holy Child

A CHILD hath ever been to me
A wonder and a mystery
As lovely as a flower.

For any bloom to me can bring
All the rapt witchery of the spring,
And with white, fragrant wizardry
Evoke that scented hour.

So can a little, blooming child,
Its budding, rosy face all bright
With infant and unworldly light,
By some white magic, mighty as 'tis mild,
Evoke that paradisal springtide of our race,
'Till my rapt soul, with hazy joy, can trace
The primal innocence,
When, clear of all offense,
(Ere the tart fruitage of that bitter tree)
Our kind from Adam's blighting sin was free.

Yet, best of all the might

These small and potent lords of hearts achieve,
The charm most bright

Their vague, sweet looks and aimless gestures weave,
'Tis to recall

That loveliest Spring of all,

When Israel's Flower on Mary's bosom lay.

And all our hopes, that long were languishing,

Bloomed in a second and more splendid Spring,
And dusky dawn was brightened unto Day!

I never see a mother with her dear,
 Making her arms a shrine, secure and deep,
 To guard the dewy sweetness of his sleep,
Or keep his waking glee from harm and fear,
Than swiftly, to my joy,
Come visions of that Mother and her Boy!

For as one flower to a glorious prime,
 One bloom, to all of Springtide's wide delight,
So are all babes upon the breast of time
 Unto this Babe. Wherefore, of very right—
As any bloom forevermore can bring
The glory and the freshness of the Spring,—
So any babe, dear Lord, can hint to me
The sweetness of Thy holy infancy!

In the Classroom

GENTLE among her ruddy flock she stands,
Their dewy faces sleepy as the morn,
Fresh as the summer flowers in the corn,
Sweet as the daisies on the meadow-lands.
And, droning like a hive of honey bees,
They con their tasks, that smiling nun to please,—
She holds their little hearts within her hands.

And she, for Christ, Sweet Lord, her tasks pursuing,—
Love craveth labor though the task be sore,—
Some tender deed forever will be doing.
To make them love her Jesus, more and more.
With patient eyes she scans their candid faces,
She sees not far beyond their childish graces,
Nor recks the cost, nor counts the gain ensuing.

Yet this slight lad a bishop God will make,
To rule a people with the love she gave.
Yon laughing lass will go, for Jesus' sake,
To toil in heathen lands Love's willing slave.
Thus, teaching day by day the ruddy rows,
She sows the seed, nor knoweth what she sows,—
In distant years the billowy harvests wake.

In the Slums

*A*RE daisies sweet, that silver blow;
Or daffodils, with sunny eyes,
Or violets dim, that purple glow
Or roses rich that scented rise?

Is dawn most dear, that all the skies
Can gild with fair and tender light?
Is morning blest, that glowing lies
Upon the breast of slumbering night?

These dost thou love, with deep delight,
And seek'st thou these with rapture mild?—
Lo, dawn and morn and flowers are bright
In the pure face of yonder child!

Childish

A LITTLE child, it marvels still
At simple and familiar sights,
The glittering moon and stars, that spill
Their common splendours on the nights,
The laughter of the waves, the kind
Soft whispering voices in the wind.

Such a small child, with wonder great,
Surveys the lesser things it sees,
With every novel sight elate;—
Yet blinks life's vaster mysteries.
Its mother's love, its father's care,—
These are as common as the air!

We are such children all our days!
The lesser goods amaze us most,
And showy things, and brief, we praise;
Making our passing life our boast,—
While God's great love, and heaven's height,
Elude our weak and childish sight!

The Reading Child

OUT of the world, where watchful teachers stand,
With weary lessons and forbidding books,
She here has wandered to a fairy land
Of haunted meadows, musical with brooks.

Elves and quaint fairies on the lawns are gay,
In weaving mazes of a mystic dance,—
This tale has stol'n her dreaming heart away,
And witch'd her mind from mortal circumstance.

THE BELOVED WOMAN

The Presentation of the Virgin

THAT morn

All the dim temple smiled with misty light;
No nook forlorn,

But had its tiny quiver of delight,
Gladly that day was born,
White blooming, like a lily, from the night.

Through the dim courts there ran

Some golden premonitions of the hour.
Nimbly the sun began

Its sudden glory on each startled tower,
Aureoled with lingering shreds of dawn.
Pale expectation gleamed from turrets wan.

So, peacefully, they came,
 Anna and Joachim and their blessed Child.
Her coming, like a flame,
 Lit all the courts with splendour, and they smiled.
Celestial laughter thrilled the walls with bliss.
None of their mighty stones had seen a joy like this!

The guardian angels of that temple grey,
 Wheeling in white and shining ranks of glory,
Their jubilant and heavenly array
 Marshalled in hovering joy on every story,
Wreathing the sad and shade-dishonored closes
With living garlands, of celestial roses!

Even the purblind beggar at the gate,
 Craving his alms, with unbeholding eyes,
Leapt in sweet wonder, vivid and elate,
 His youth renewed and glowing with surprise.
Breathless he looked, with comprehension vast,—
Then fell to earth and worshipped as she passed!

The priests and levites in the holy place
 Felt their hearts trembling with mysterious fires;
The little Maid, with bright and modest grace,
 Takes her calm way amid the thrilling choirs,
So small and brave; so slight a form, to bear,
Such a vast dawn of hope, such glory wear!

The Espousals of the Virgin

SOME red as holy love, some virginal white,
The trees are candelabras of delight.
The shimmering lawns, their silken robes uncreased,
Wait in new splendour for the coming feast,
Small minstrels, in the lap of every bough,
Are trilling sweet and silvery preludes now.
And, slanting on the breeze that rustles low,
A rain of white and ruddy blossoms blow,
Strewing, for her fair feet, the quivering grass below.

Then, sudden, all the glowing world of June
Grows pale as flickering tapers in the noon!
Over its bright and radiant array
A shame hath spread. What dims the glorious day,
And steals the pride of Summer's prime away?

With gentle steps, above the quickening lawn,
Whose timid flowers bow to kiss her feet,
A maiden comes. Another light doth dawn
On the proud brilliance of this summer sweet.
And at her beauty, earth, that was so bright,
Is dimmed, as when the moon, some starry night,
Beams in the sky, the gates of heaven unbars,
And drinks the brightness of the burning stars.

For she doth walk in maidenly loveliness,
Incredible to earth, and far more fair
Than any fabled goddess, feigned to bless
The golden age. Those poets would despair
Whose fecund fancies once the gods begot
Of Greece and Ind, if they were bid to sing
The glories of this Virgin without spot,
Nor all their loftiest dreams achieved so fair a thing!

Now Joseph comes, a man upon whose face
Great purity and meekness blend and mingle,
Giving his modest port a sober grace.
Calm is his mien, for all his soul is single,
His thoughts, like flowers, ever look above,
Wherefore his life smells sweet and blooms with love.

Now are they met, and now the vows are spoken
That these two hearts in stainless wedlock bind.
Forever more shall each preserve unbroken
These chaste espousals of the heart and mind.
Forever more these virgins twain shall be
Wedded in faith as in virginity.

The Annunciation

A MAIDEN, pure
As lilies, or the silver sheen of stars,
Modest as twilight, when sad Evening bars
The doors of Day! Most holy and demure,
Yet brighter than the exulting Dawn, when high
She startles all the East, yea, far more fair
Than beauty ever was, in earth or sky,
So that 'twere scorn her fairness to compare,
And loveliness grew pale when she was by!

In the lit silence of her chamber small,
She kneels before her Lord and speaks to Him.
The flamings of her love appal
The mighty hearts of startled seraphim.
The wheeling flocks of angels hover near,
Intent to feel
That burning light,—they flee in holy fear.
Such praise from out a mortal heart to hear,—
Their vast and wildered throngs in mazy wonder wheel!

Then Gabriel,
Ambassador of God's most high decree,
Speeds forth to tell
What should the earth from woe and horror free.
With toilless wings,
Forth darting like a meteor from the height,
How he doth scorn the frowning piles of kings!—
The lordly cities, basking in their pride,—
Yea, thou Jerusalem, that wast God's bride,—
But now art faithless, sold for carnal things.
He takes his flight,
Where, in a lowly cottage by the way,
That heaven-beseeching Maid doth pray!

Most breathless now

Both earth and sky in thrilling silence wait.
The heaven bares its bright and glorious brow;
By all the stars, great angels stand in state;
Listening, for never, in their blue serene,
Such swift and bright envoy from heaven
to earth was seen!

Like a white lily bloom, that sways
All glowing in the summer shine;
Bending, yon holy maiden prays
In the hushed radiance of her shrine.
When sudden on her startled sight
There dawneth a celestial Light!

"Hail, full of grace," the angel said
"Blessed art thou
Amongst all women, blessed is the Fruit
Of thy womb!" On his shining brow
There was a rapture, sweet and dread—
Earth heard its joy and hell its doom.
Into the country of the dead
Rolled the deep tidings. At hell's bitter root
The devils groaned. In limbo's shadowy room
Sweet laughter shook the darkness at that sound.
In heaven, fair canticles and paeans ran around.

Oh! in what maiden and deep-startled beauty
She heard those words of most great joy and fear!
How well she answered! How, in lowly duty,
The courteous angel all her doubts could clear.
How meekly, then, she spake, in sweet accord;
"Behold the lowly handmaid of the Lord,
And be it done to me as thou hast said!"

Then, the Word
Became our flesh. All flesh salvation heard!
As thus she bent her head
Tumultuous joy through all the ages poured,
The heavens rang
With unaccustomed transport, earth was shaken
With such a tremulous ecstasy of rapture,
As might the older and unfallen mirth recapture.
Yea, all creation sang
That one might dream the sinful world retaken
By primal innocence and early glee;
The universe laughed so loud in jubilee!

I greet you both: O thou, the mother-maiden,
Whose bosom shelters now the God-made-man,
And thou, angelic messenger, with rapture laden,—
Bright herald of eternal Mercy's plan!
I pray you both for aid and consolation,
On your sweet day of the Annunciation!

The Visitation

IT was fair dawning, and the rippling hills
Laughed with a glory of the merry East.
The sky was like the hollow of a shell,
And, burning on the summit of the world,
A jewel, torch, and then a flaming fire,
Slowly the sun surpassed the rim of earth
And soared into his heavens. The slumbering land
Stirred with small, sleepy noises; twittering birds
Tried their first trebles. Then, the world awoke,
And trembled sweet with Day.

She came, afar.

Upon the reverent hills there sudden brake
A second, lovelier dawning. Then the sun
Filmed his bright eye, as 't were unmeet to look
Too near upon this vision, not of earth
Nor of his sphere, but lovelier than the stars.

Ah, but what words,—for words were meant to bear
But earthly burdens—can these beauties tell,
That wooed the God Triune to love and choose,
For Mother, Daughter and for Virgin Spouse,
This pearl of all creation, this fair pearl
Immaculate, of all unsullied ray,
From her first being till she ceased to breathe
And went to enrapture heaven! Weary words,
Resume that fiery freshness once ye had
When Adam named creation. Dare to praise!

A wonder hovered o'er her. Was't the keen,
Swift flashing of the swords of seraphim,
That hedged their destined Queen? Was it the stir
Of hosts and legions of the sons of light,
Weaving their sightless mazes, drunk with joy?—
Like bees above a flower, and come to gaze
At this sweet hope, that should re-people heaven!
Or was't her own bright beauty, pure as fair?—

Still, as she walked, the reverential eye
Saw things unutterable, yet it knew
Wonders unseen. She passed as in a cloud
Of contemplation, sweetly tranced and fired
By her bright thoughts, and every thought a prayer;
While on her brow, like a bright blush, there glowed
The ruddy hue of heaven's charity.

Graceful her step and strong. Not slow she sped
To meet her cousin's need, yet never maid
With such a sweet composure walked, before.
Her countenance was lovely. Not alone
As fresh and pure as the clear morning star,
But beautiful with love. For loveliness
Is named of love, and from her virgin heart,
More filled with heavenly flame than any work
Of God's before, uprose that lovely glow
That made her look an angel. Undefined
With any shade of evil, she was fair
Because so good, and as most good, most fair.
Her loveliness was inward; like a lamp
It threw its beams abroad,

There, as she passed,
The shaggy hills sleeked their rude sides for joy,
The gloves grew comelier, the wistful clouds
Dript down in dew, the meadows brake to flowers,
The brooks, that chattered by the way, were whist,
The harvests waved more plenteous, and the trees,
Waving the mighty garments of their prime,
Gestured in reverence, gravely worshipful,
Each in its courteous kind. The solemn vales,
That had of old quaked to prophetic tones,
That heralded her coming, now were stilled
In misty wonder, and the peaks of eld,
That had so long looked forward through the years,
Quivered through all their heights, their rocky hearts
Shaken with awe.

Those kingly presences
That of old time had ruled Judea's hills,
Seemed momentarily about her, and she walked
Surrounded with ethereal retinues
Of beauty-raptured cherubs, that had fled
From the warm courts of bliss to be her ward.
The glory and the splendour and the song
Of earth and heaven, and all their hope and love,
Were chalice'd in the bosom of this maid;
And in her stainless care she bore abroad
The Treasure of the world.

Oh! rapt in prayer
Beyond our dim conceiving, she communed
With thoughts unutterable. Whelmed in God,
Unto the Father with a daughter's heart,
Unto the Son with more than mother's love,
Unto the Spirit, as His virgin spouse,
Her soul was eloquent. Her fiery heart
Amazed the seraphs, and they hovered round
To warm them at her flame.

Thus, hastening,
Her steps consumed the spaces of the hills,
Quickened with love. In little time she came
Unto Elizabeth, and in her arms
Was clasped with peace. She heard her cousin say
"Blessed art thou of women." Then, the song
That had been thrilling in her heart all morn,
Broke into words, and listening earth, and heaven,
Learned a new canticle of perfect praise.

"My soul doth magnify the Lord," she said,
"My spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour,
He that is mighty doth great things to me,
And blessed is His name." O holy maid,
O hallowed mother, highest, lowliest,—thou
Art an epitome of God's gifts in men!

The Epiphany

DEAR Lady, may I be
A looker-on at the Epiphany?

It is the close of an adoring day:
All the light long,
The hours have sped away,
In speechless wonder and in faltering song.
Earth hath a timid and a fond desire
To make the Babe forget His heaven's choir.
Humbly her skies and groves their charms display.

Yet He,
Clinging in rapture to the maiden blest,
Whom, from eternity,
He hath fore-chosen for His peace and rest,
No other charms can see;
Content, on her pure breast!

It is most still:

And sunset lingers in the West, to gaze

On that unearthly Sun,

Whose splendour shall o'er run

All the far world, transfiguring its ways.

When lo!

From out the dusk, there flow

A flood of camels, pouring on the hill!

Ungainly swift, they leap

Toward the dim cave, where angels guardiance keep.

From their tall flanks the startled sunset flings

Gleams of bright gold, from the rich robes of kings!

The star above

Glows sweetly on the gathering night:

Below, the Star of love

Shines from His mother's arms, with tender light.

Lured by that lovely splendour, from afar

Swarms of swift angels, oaring to the star,

Throng round the cave, exulting in that sight,—

Yet in His mother's eyes alone He finds delight!

Gaspar and Baltazar and Melchior,

From their pavilions moving, as in sleep,

Come on with awful wonder, to the door

Of that dim cave, where heaven its court doth keep.

With myrrh, with incense and with gleaming gold
Obsequious their servants haste,—
Poor gifts for Him, whose hands unrolled
Creation's wealth upon the waste.
The Babe looks not, He will not see
Earth's wealth and pompous pageantry.
His eyes
Upon His mother rest, in glad and tender wise.

Then she, forever pitiful and good,
Looking in grave and comely gentleness
Where in great awe the bashful kings have stood,
Pleads with her Babe, and bids Him turn and bless.

And He
Who hath awaited but her whispering plea,
Opens His arms with love, and seems to take
Their gifts and them—for His dear Mother's sake!

The Presentation in the Temple

CLEAR and bright,
 Blazes the sunshine on the temple's walls,
 With such keen, quivering radiance as appalls
The fascinated sight,
And makes the vision reel, with a bewildering light!

The courts are clad in silence. Such a still
 And tense expectancy as once, of eld,
 The new-made universe in waiting held;
Ere man, its master, wakened at God's will.

Up the broad ways,
Past corridors and vistas manifold,
Past open spaces, where the sunbeams slumber
On fretted stones, through courtyards, vast to hold
Great hosts of men and women, past all number,
In the fair, ceremonial pomp of holy days,—
Cometh a Maiden; in her arms, a Child,
And by her side, a man of aspect mild,
Whose whispering lips are eloquent with God's praise.

List, as they come
The chanting of the levites falleth dumb!
The victim, scathless, cries
On the clean, garnished stone of sacrifice.
The startled priest
Hath sudden from his ceremonial ceased;
From her tranced prayer the ancient widow starts,—
A sweet, unearthly awe hath spelled their secret hearts!

Then, with unutterable love and duty,
 Clasping her Child in a most near embrace,
Bent wistful over His unearthly beauty,
 Wherein her eyes a dawning heaven can trace,
All her deep heart in selfless love outpoured,
She offers up her Lamb unto the Lord!

Oh! gentle Lamb, how meek and good He lies
On that fair altar of His sacrifice,
His Mother's pure and most adoring breast.
 How His soft limbs, devoted for our peace,
Rest patient in her arms. For our release
She giveth freely Whom she loveth best!

Oh! how the eager angels reverent run
To see and marvel at so great a scene.
Here, to His Father immolate, the Son
Uplifted Mary holds, the heavens and earth between.

The savour of the ancient rites hath ceased.
Now to cometh to His fane the eternal Priest!

Then, with beating heart, and eyes
Flooded with delighted tears,
Simeon doth prophesy:
To his gaze the sorrows rise
Of the soon and fateful years,
And the joys that come thereby.

Patient, lowly, Mary hears,
 Making still the same reply
That the herald angel heard:
“Lo, the handmaid of the Lord!—
 Be it therefore done to me,
All according to thy word!”

Did she clasp Him still more near,
 Wending from that fane away?
Unimaginably dear,
 Yet a victim, doomed that day!

Valiant more than Maccabee,
More than Judith valiant she,
Bowing to that hard decree,
For the rood and lance and rod,
Shepherding her Lamb of God!

The Assumption

I AM unworthy, and I here confess
The heights and deeps of that unworthiness,
To name the holy mystery of this day.
Yet a great joy can take a fear away!

The brooding night,
Hath fixed her starry eyes upon a tomb.
Day's elsewhere vanished light
Lingers in beauty on that lowly room.
The moon leans toward it, with her silvery bars,
There is a yearning through the gazing stars.

Now, on the coasts of sky,
The silent doors of Heaven gape with joy,
And multitudinous angels throng on high,
Where their long ranks in dazzling light deploy.

Through all the hollow dome,
The flaming choirs outroam.
The Heaven's rim
Burns bright with seraphs, shines with cherubim,
They line the wondering sky, and make night's jewels' dim;
This way and that the splendid hosts divide,
And make a lane of light, to yon sepulchre's side.

And now,

What hush of waiting holds the world?
From heaven's dreadful brow,

There leaps a light, in dazzling flames outhurled.
The tall, angelic legions quake with holy fear,

And bow their princely ranks in humble kind,
Lo, on the luminous night, in keener flame defined,
The King of Glory walks, in awful splendour clear!

Words, words! They cannot limn

Even that outward loveliness,
That cloaked and covered Him,
So that our mortal eyes His beauty could not guess.
It is eternity's undimmed surprise
Only to see the kindness of His eyes!

Then who,
Gazing our fleshly orbs of dulness through,
Conjectures with what yearning, through the gloom,
Coming, He gazed upon His mother's tomb!

Now, flamed the legioned angels still more bright,
And earth and heaven with gilding rays were hoary,
The night was shattered by the pouring light,
And fainted in intolerable glory:
Brake the dark sky, and to that world from this
Made a clear path into the Place of Bliss!

Then, with unutterably sweet sound,
Upon the awestruck air around,
 He spake one consecrated word:
"Mother!" He said.

Though she was dead,—
 She heard!
Though a great stone lay heavy o'er her head,
 Yea, even in her cerements, she stirred.
 Never her loving heart had disobeyed
His slightest whisper. At His summons, now,
The ruddy life blushed in her brow.

An eager angel thrust away the stone,
And rising, startled but all unafraid,
Her shining eyes in joy on Him alone,
Seeing all Heaven in her Holy One,
She spake to Him: "My Son!"

Need I say on? How they two, hand in hand,
Alone together in extreme delight,
Though thronged about by all the heavenly band,
Walked, in sweet converse, up that lane of light?

How all their hearts were uttered, each to each,
Whose love no slightest variance could dis sever;
Who had no need of words, whose rapturous speech
Of souls, not tongues, their bliss prolongs forever?

Ah God, but some day soon to be
Not too far off from this sweet mystery,
Where the bright rivers of their converse run;
And hear what praise, she hath from her fair Son!

Then may they turn their shining looks on me,
And Mary say the thanks from me, that I
From a full heart would offer up on high!
Then Jesus, most benign, will make reply
And praise my gentle Mother, worthily!

To My Mother

NOW, suddenly, I see
All God imparted when He gave me thee!
Ages of mercy, vast designs I caught,
Swiftly, and with a single thought!

I saw a woman clasp her little son,
And as she pressed him closely to her breast,
Lo! motherhood itself stood clear confessed,—
That these two lives were woven into one!
Wistful she leaned, to make her heart his bed,
See the soft trust of his small, drooping head;
Content,
In that small world of her embraces pent,
Where all the tides of his young being start,
Upborne and moulded on his mother's heart.

And then I saw
Great motherhood's inexorable law,
And why, with such vast yearning, deep and mild,
The woman leans so tender to her child.

Never more lovely doth her fondness show,
Than, to her little lamb, thus bending low.
Christ would Himself a tender lambkin be,
To give this glory, Mother Maid, to thee!

In that first, tender flower of life,
Mark how she truly bears again her son,
Before the strife
Sweeps him from forth her fostering arms!
How cautiously she keeps him from all harms,
Gives him first lessons in all early lore,
Moulds him, that never, while his days shall run,
Her mighty influence may leave him more!

Wherefore, I now confess,
If there be in me any nobleness,
That hath grown slowly in me, hour by hour,
Survived the years, takes gradual increase
And ripens now unto my lasting peace,
It is owed to thee, Mother, bud and flower!

And ah, I weep,
Mourning that goodness that I did not keep;
For, after thee,
Life's wildering storms must have their hour with me,
And who
That withering tempest cometh scathless through?
Yet, for the good I have, the praise is all thy due!

Nay, from thy face I learned at first to guess
God's own love, and His tireless tenderness.
Thy melting glance first taught me to surmise
The light in Mary's eyes,
And what I knew of thy white innocence,
Thy guileless soul, thy mind without offence,
And that sweet miracle of Christ's pure art
That kept thee virgin in thy mother's heart,
Gave me the inward vision swift to see
How a pure virgin might a mother be!

All motherhood was glorified to me
By what my childish wonder saw in thee!

The Nuns

I DESIRE

Words that are sweet as dawn and strong as fire!
I here beseech,
From the Immortal Love, felicities of speech.
And thou, serene, celestial maid,
Who art the Mother of God's very Son,
Upon my lips be thy bright fingers laid
Else what I yearn to sing may never be begun!
For, joyfully, I see
All sweetest song hath still its source in thee!

For I would praise the virgins of the Lord,—
A theme elusive as the lilies are,
Or the swift gleams from sudden sunrise poured,
Or silvery tremblings of a timid star.
Yet is much loveliness and majesty
Hid in their lives. So Mary, prosper me!

There is great sorrow in the tribes of men,
Grief stalks abroad, with his dark shadow, fear;
Even the blessed souls might grieve again,—
If they could grieve, earth's piteous woes to hear!
Have mercy as of old! For our delight
Send us some angels, Lord, to cheer the night!

Sore is our need of prayer!
What choruses of supplication sweet,
From those white choirs, from the cloisters fair,
Rise in low music to the Saviour's feet.
Where in their peace the calm and holy nuns
The gentle cadence of their psalms repeat,
Whence, over all the world, a stream of blessing runs.
They plead in peace with God, those meek, resistless ones!

Lo! little children, sunny in their glee,
Restless as blossoms when the wind is high,
Racing in merry legions, row on row!
Orphaned of mothers? Ah, how motherly
These virgins are! God giveth them to know
Unto all childish needs to make reply,
And other mothers to these babes to be!

Where, in the darkened wards, the sufferers moan,
These silent forms with mercy move and wait,
Where the sad poor in anguish weep alone,
As to their Lord, they haste, in pity great;
No shame too deep, nor any want too sore,
For their sweet mercy. With angelic art
They melt the hard, and cheer the fainting heart,
Bringing their alms to every stricken door.

Dear Brides of Christ, for unto Him, in peace,
Is poured the treasure of your virgin love,
To Him, with never cease,
Leaps your quick zeal, like fires that strain above.

May He
Your never-ending guerdon be!
And may some sparks of that abounding fire,
That feeds the furnace flame of your desire,
Leap forth, to kindle fair the heart of me!

Our Lady of the Rain

DEAR Lady, when the noon is grey,
And wistful showers wet the hills,
When pallid are the cheeks of day,
And weaving mist the distance fills,
When desolate the woodland lies,
The drear and sunless air is pain,—
Then, unto thee I turn mine eyes,
And hail thee, Lady of the Rain!

There is such sunlight in the thought,
Even the fleeting thought, of thee,
That all the dreary world is brought
Under a cheerful witchery.
The air is sweeter, and the reek
Of meadows hath a wet delight.
Thy name can make the storm clouds meek,
And break with beams their mimic night.

When, on our weary spirits, pour
The dropping tears, in dull refrain,
Then let us call, and grieve no more,—
On thee, dear Lady of the Rain!

At Nazareth

ONCE, in full summer, when the dusk was prayer,
And meditative glories cheered the west,
They sate, the three together. Then His years
Were ripening to the loveliest flower of youth.
And even in the twilight, Mary's eyes
Were on His face, adoring. All around
Upbreathed ambrosial odors of the night,
And from the steaming censers of the hills
Rose misty incense. Luminous and vast
Shone the soft hollow of the summer sky,
Where, at each instant, came an adoring star.
The hush was as the thrilling hush of Heaven,
After a seraph's song, and all the air
Was instinct with illimitable peace.

Their weary day was done. Her singing loom
Had ceased its long and querulous psalmody.
From Jesus' Hands,—those fair and sinewy Hands,
So like to David's own, that stirred the strings
And gripped the sword,—the rugged tools were by.
And Joseph's horny palms were clasped in rest.
What spake they? Nay, they were not thralls to words,
Their sweet converse was silence, wrapped in God.

CHRIST THE KING

Elect

*B*E patient, winds that wander,
And nurse the growing grain!
Be sedulous, ye sunbeams,
And warm the fields again!
For more than mortal feast and fare,
This golden harvest ye prepare!

Drip down your sweets, ye showers,
Upon the thirsty clod!
A mystery haunts the hours,—
This meadow smiles to God!
His body soon shall come, complete,
And seek a vesture from this wheat!

Here wave, the angels know them,
Elect and chosen grains.
The winnowing shall blow them,
The miller lend his pains,—
'Till heaven adores, with holy strife,
Where once was bread—but now is Life!

A Visit

*A*S one
Who, from the stifling banquet hall,—
Where hot carousals have begun,
And the thick air upon the sense doth pall,—
Steals forth in haste
From flare and din, a secret door unbars,
The taintless, freshening airs of night to taste:—
Then, as his wildered sight
Recovers from the light,
He sees the heavens blossom slow with stars!

Even so,
Aside from the wide glare of noon I go,
Out from the passionate street,
With life's incessant revel echoing sore;
Where greed, and wrath, and joy, and envy meet,
And seek Thy chapel's door!

Within that portal, peace

Is sweet and deep.

Like vanished incense on the air doth sleep
A brooding holiness. Here, sorrows cease
To wear the heart. Yea, as I enter in,
All earth's wild clamor dies:
As when the weary guest flees from the banquet-din,
Out to the summer's night and starry skies.

O Thou all-hallowed Heart,

That makest heaven of this lowly cell!

O Christ, Thou wait'st apart,

So near life's ways that whosoe'er would ease
His laboring bosom need but turn aside
To holy shades like these,
From the mad street, and in this dimness hide,
And to Thy listening love his burdens tell!

Soon, as his sight
 Recovers from the daze and glare,
His bosom, with delight,
 Drinks the sweet freshness of this holy air;
He sees,
 Within that darkened room,
The eternal verities
 And heaven's lights dawn shining through the gloom!

The Young Priest to His Hands

TIME was when ye were powerless,
To shrive and sign, anoint and bless.
Clasp'd, ye worshipped from afar
That Host, as distant as a star.
Your palms were barren still, and cold.
Ye might not touch, ye might not hold,
God, Whom the signs of bread enfold!

But now, ah now, most happy hands,
Ye fold the Saviour's swaddling bands.
Ye lift His tender limbs and keep,
The snowy bed where He doth sleep.
His heart, His blood, His being fair,
All God and Man, is in your care!
Ye are His guardians everywhere.

Ye pour the wine, ye break the bread,
For the great Supper, sweet and dread!
Ye dress the rood of sacrifice,
Whereon the morning Victim lies!
And when my trembling accent calls,
Swift leaping from His Heaven's walls,
On you the Light of Glory falls!

Corpus Christi

THE ceremonious incense, dim and sweet,
Now makes its mimic heaven in the shrine.
The voices and the organ strive, and meet,
In soft, unearthly melody divine,
A hallowed light
From the gold beams of many candles falls,
And weaves a halo bright,
On the meek saints, fair smiling from the walls.

And now the holy rite is slow begun,
With genuflexions due, and murmured prayers.
Alert and swift the little servers run,
Lest any need should take them unawares,—
The bells sing loud! The Body of the Lord
Lies wrapped in veiling forms,—unseen, yet deep adored!

Oh! what a silence in the holy fane,
What brooding awe, too vast for any word,
Only the soft and tremulous sigh is heard
That tells of joy so keen it turns to pain.

At last,
The climax of the awful Rite is past;
And, hid within the conscious monst'rance, lies
The Victim of the eternal Sacrifice!

Then, in their massy vestments, thick with gold,
Pacing unto the solemn organ's cries,

Come the grave priests; within their reverent hold
The God of love, unseen of fleshly eyes.

Apparelled each in white,
 Their glowing faces fairer than their posy,
Small, chubby girls, all dewy with delight,
 Strew wilting blossoms with fresh fingers rosy!
Making a road whereon, with solemn pace,
 The blessed Guest of this auspicious morn,
 In the hid triumph of His Feast is borne,—
Themselves the loveliest blooms in all the place!—
Till one may hear, above the harmony,
“Suffer these little ones to come to Me!”

Communion in The Hospital

UNTO my breast,
In His small pyx, I clasp the Lord;
Most nearly pressed
Unto my heart, and tenderly adored;
So close, I feel
Warmth from His heart into my bosom steal,
And so,
Down the long, sounding corridors we go,
Bearing this living Solace unto woe!

The weary wards are heavy still with sleep.
'Tis very early. Tender glances rise
But here and there, where the adorers' eyes
Open, with awe, and reverential peep,
To see the Lord walk forth in this disguise.

Then tinkle, tinkle, down the darkened halls,
The silvery bell with sweet insistence calls.

We enter many a door,

Laying this Sweetness on the lips of pain.

Pale faces, o'er

The folded coverlets grow calm again.

Now, in His white disguise, as in Judea then,

Christ walks with healing through the crowds of men!

And from our hands a wondrous comfort falls!

Here a pale lad, too young for such distress,

Strives for his breath, in sullen weariness,

Ah! see,

The Host hath lit his face to ecstasy!

There an old man, on his last sickbed laid,
Receives his Hope, and is no more afraid.
Here a wan maid, as colorless as death,
With feeble breath
Murmurs a welcome, and her face grows bright
With inner light.
An ancient woman folds her hands and prays,
In her sore heart the peace of happier days.

Thus we go, with angels over us.

Almost the brushing of their robes we feel!
Now, in His white disguise, as in Judea then,
Christ walks with pity through the crowds of men,
And lays His Hands upon their wounds, to heal!



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